

Using the ARCS-V Model to Reframe Success in Online Courses (C)

This session addresses questions about online course design and factors of student retention:

(1) Should the Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction, and Volition (ARCS-V) motivation model by John Keller reframe the design and teaching of online courses?

(2) Do factors of student retention in higher education continue to make sense in the growing context of online education?

Worth noting:

70.8% of academic leaders report in 2014 that online learning as critical for their institution's long-term strategy, compared to 48% in 2002 (Allen & Seamon, 2015, p. 4)

Not all universities have low online course retention. [University of Illinois, Springfield](#), reported maintaining a retention rate just 2-3% below classroom courses, 94% online reported in 2007. This university uses "high touch" strategies, e.g., contact with students, use of student peers in online learning. Faculty development includes online workshops and certificate programs, and classes are kept small, e.g. 25 students. [U.S. News](#) ranks the top online programs. What do they do?

QM™ reports express concern about satisfaction but the QM™ rubric does not include satisfaction such as expressed in ARCS elements. **REFLECTION:** Compare the QM™ rubric with the ARCS-V model.

Answers to the two questions listed at the top will evolve from discussing the following findings:

- A. Different variables affect dropout rates in on-campus v. online courses[or do they mirror traditional college completion patterns?] [and, if the factors are the same, what does this say about the quality of online course design and instruction when retention rates tend to be lower online? Or is it only a difference in students?] This discussion issue OVERLAPS with "c." on predictors of success.
- B. Student effort overcomes other variables.
- C. Predictors of success (retention) include organizational support, online resources, relevance, confidence (including Internet self-efficacy), and satisfaction
- D. Student-student interactions can increase withdrawals, but some interactions improve retention.

RESEARCH DISCUSSION ACTIVITY:

Summarize your experience related to online course design, instruction, learning, and evaluating online courses. (If you are in a group, summarize your "group experience." For example, "We have all taught online 10 or more years, and some of us have done peer reviews of online programs.")

You will be given research excerpts for one of the discussion issues. Your task is to review the research findings and discuss them with your partner or group.

(1) Come to a decision about whether the discussion issue statement (A, B, C, or D in the above list) is verified or nullified by the research, or if the jury is still out.

(2) Determine if your review and decision has implications for integrating the ARCS-V model in some way with the standards for online courses.

Share your group experience and your decisions and rationale with the whole group.

REMINDER:

Felten, P. (2013). *Principles of good practice in SoTL*. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, 1(1) 121–125.

- Inquiry focused on student learning
- Grounded in context
- Methodologically sound
- Conducted in partnership with students
- Appropriately public

C—Predictors of success (retention) include organizational support, online resources, relevance, confidence (Internet self-efficacy), and satisfaction.

OVERLAPS with “a.” on variables that affect dropouts.

Chang, Liu, Sung, Lin, Chen, & Cheng, S. (2014): “Students with high Internet self-efficacy outperformed those with low Internet self-efficacy on the final exam and were more confident in their ability to complete an online course.” Previous studies showed similar results: Joo, Bong, & Choi, 2000; Tsai & Tsai, 2003. (p. 373) [Surveys and data from 87 students in an online course.]

Cho, 2012: Cho used an online program’s formative evaluation data from 67 students in an online course. Students need to “understand the nature of online learning,” “use Blackboard skillfully,” “solve technical issues,” and “develop self-awareness about learning skills required for online learning.” (p. 1055).

Cho, & Shen (2013): **Goal orientation** and **academic self-efficacy** support achievement. Encourage goal orientation with rationales, like “Reading the text could teach you how to . . .” (p. 297); support academic self-efficacy, with course design, organization, facilitating discussions, giving positive feedback, and helping students set challenging achievable goals (pp. 297-298) [Surveys and data for 64 students.]

Park & Choi, 2009: “. . . family support, organizational support, satisfaction, and relevance” and individual characteristics (p. 207) can predict drop out or persistence. Statistical results “imply that lower dropout rates can be achieved if online program developers or instructors find ways to enhance the relevance of the course” (p. 207). Research review: **relevance and satisfaction** highly correlate with instructional design, course organization, facilitation, and interaction (citing Shea et al., 2003).” (p. 209)

Kuo, Walker, Bellam, & Shroder, 2013: “Technical problems while using the Internet may cause student frustration and dissatisfaction (Choy, McNickle, & Clayton, 2002).” (p. 19) Chu and Chu (2010) found a positive correlation between Internet self-efficacy and satisfaction; Rodriguez Robles (2006) found Internet self-efficacy is not a significant predictor of student satisfaction ; Artino (2007) found motivational components of self-regulation are positively related to satisfaction. [Surveys and data for 111 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in 11 accelerated 8-week online classes.]

Shanley, 2009, 2011: From a review of studies: Retention and success is supported by: Support services, frequent contact, clearly stated expectations, student orientation, relevancy and accuracy of content, faculty preparedness, student ‘Locus of Control’, student participation, and social integration with peer-to-peer support. . . older students can juggle multiple responsibilities more than the younger ones.

Kim & Keller, 2008: Personalized motivational messages led to higher confidence and grades.

Huett, Moller, Bray, Young, Huett, 2008: Students receiving motivational emails had higher relevance, satisfaction, motivation, and performance scores.[Surveys and data from 81 students.]

Street, 2010, research review: **Self-efficacy, self-determination,** autonomy, and time management, family, organizational and technical support, and course **relevance** influenced decisions to persist or drop.

Mahmood, 2014, student research: **Significant predictors of persistence** and dropout in online courses were age, employment status, and **satisfaction**.

Hart, 2012, review: Students who persist have higher self-efficacy, that is, confidence to complete a learning or performance task, which supports effort and resiliency “in the face of obstacles to persistence” (Kemp, 2002, cited in Hart, 2012).